



Nepal Celebrates ICAO Day 2014

Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, in association with Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal and entire aviation fraternity celebrated the 70th ICAO Day on December 7, 2014 with a walkathon and flag raising program at TIA followed by a formal program. Air transport supports economic, social and cultural developments, and is the safest and most efficient mode of mass transportation. Since the formation of International Civil Aviation Organization by 26 member states, ICAO membership has grown to 191 member states now and in the last 70 years, air transport industry has witnessed extraordinary growth, from 9 million schedule passengers in 1945 to 3.3 billion passengers now. Civil aviation will continue to grow to 6.3 billion passengers by 2030. Nepal joined ICAO in 1960 and since then there has been unprecedented growth in air traffic passenger to over 6 million in 2013 including 3.1 million in international services, 1.5 million in domestic from TIA and 1.4 million at other airports.

Walkathon: General Manager of TIA Mr. Birendra Shrestha welcomed participants of the walkathon from TIAIP Sinamangal to TIA Fountain area, where Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation raised Nepal and ICAO flags.



Formal Program: In a formal program at Union hall, Mr. Rajan Pokhrel, Director of CAAN welcomed all the participants and shared some interesting facts about the beginning of Chicago Convention of ICAO in December 1944. Director General Mr. Satish Chandra Lal Suman highlighted the theme topic of ICAO Day: Cooperating on Global Aviation Progress: Celebrating 70 Years of Chicago Convention". He reviewed the role of connectivity for socio-economic growth, and said Asia- Pacific is the largest region of ICAO with fast (over 13% annual) growth in air traffic. With the development of regional international airport at Bhairawa, connectivity with foreign airline will improve further, he said.



Best Pilots of the Year: Capt. Prabhu Saran Pathak Prize 2014, instituted by his wife after he died in Agni Air crash in 2012, was announced for the first time to the Best Pilot of the Year achieving the highest safety standards. Capt. Gyan Prasad Rai of Yeti Airlines from the fixed wing and Capt. Pramod Kumar Lama, helicopter pilot of Manang Air were declared best Pilots of the Year 2014 and awarded Rs,25,000/- each cash and certificate by the Secretary of the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation.



Capt. Gyan Rai has had remarkable safety record through his career of 19,600 hours of flying experience in 33 years since 1981 when he joined Nepal Airlines, moved to Necon Air in 1992 and to Yeti Airlines since 1998. "No pilot is perfect and we have to learn from our mistakes" he said. Senior Helicopter pilot Capt. Pramod Lama had been a VIP pilot since 2006.

Capt. Rameshwor Thapa, president of Airline Operator's Association of Nepal said this is good start to recognize best pilot in order to promote safety. Air transport is the most efficient mode of transport and an important contributor for socio- economic development of the country. He also indicated the declining number of national fleet of aircraft and emphasized that Nepal should encourage import of more aircraft, besides the age limit, for the sustainability of the industry, which is badly affected by unfairly high fuel price of Rs143 per litre.

Minister's Message: In a message, the minister for Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation Mr. Deepak Chandra Amatya reiterated his commitment to adhere to the ICAO standards for ensuring safe, secure, reliable and economical air transport system in the country while fulfilling the aspirations of the people at large. Nepal has always been striving hard to promote safety and security as stipulated by ICAO to ensure highest order in enhancing the very fragment of civil aviation arena through mutual understanding, cooperation and join force will all the stakeholders.



Safety First: Secretary Mr. Suresh Man Shrestha stated that civil aviation has sustained impressive growth in terms of the number of airlines and their network, passengers and cargo transported as well as better safety records and quality of service. Despite Significant Safety Concern (SSC) of ICAO, Nepal is very safe for flying, and called private sector operators for cooperation to improve the lapses for greater success in air safety. He remarked that Best Pilot Award in ICAO Day is a very good beginning and pledged to do his best from the government side to promote safety and regularity of flights.



Thanks: Mr. Suresh Acharya, Joint Secretary of the Ministry presented a Vote of Thanks to all those who participated in the program and helped make the program successful. He also remembered the strategic objectives of ICAO for 2014-2016, including Safety, Security, Environmental protection and Sustainable development of air transport. He also indicated that Asia Pacific is not only the largest ICAO region but is also developing fast at 7.3% growth in 2014.



Kathmandu, December 7, 2014